

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 25-48 are pending in this application. By this amendment, Claims 25 and 47 are amended; and no claims are canceled or added herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 25-29, 31-38, 43-46 and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. 2002/0079826 to Park; and Claims 30, 39, 40, 41-42 and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Park in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,983,881 to Eliasson.

With respect to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103, those rejections are respectfully traversed. In particular, the applied art does not teach or suggest at least two glass defining an internal gas-filled space, each glass substrate having an internal surface facing in a direction of the internal space and an external surface facing in a direction away from the internal space, and two electrodes, a first of the two electrodes associated with a first one of the glass substrates and a second of the two electrodes associated with a second one of the glass substrates, the two electrodes being away from the internal surface, at least one of the first and second electrodes is located on the external surface side of the respective substrate, as recited in Claim 25 and similarly recited in Claim 47.

Instead, Park discusses a flat luminescent lamp having a first and second substrate 31, 31a facing each other and forming an internal discharge region. First and second electrodes 33, 33a are buried in substrate grooves facing the internal discharge region. As discussed in [0048] of Park, upper surfaces of the first and second electrodes 33, 33a have the same vertical level as the surfaces of the first and second substrates 31, 31a. As such, the electrodes 33, 33a are formed to face the internal space, as best shown in Fig. 3. There is no

teaching or suggestion in Park for at least one of the first and second electrodes formed on the external surface of the respective substrate, as claimed. As acknowledged in the outstanding Office Action, Park does not teach or suggest the specific location of the two electrodes with respect to the substrates. Eliasson does not make up for the deficiencies of Park discussed above. However, the Office Action asserts that the claimed features do not solve any of the stated problems or yield any unexpected results. Applicants disagree.

Again, in accordance with the features of the claimed invention, at least one of the first and second electrodes is placed on the external surface of the substrate. In this way, the electrodes are placed outside of the enclosure containing the plasma gas and as a result, superior illumination characteristics are provided well suited to the use as a luminaire. Further, the glass substrate acts as capacitive protection for the electrodes against ion bombardment. Additionally, with the claimed configuration, the problem of connection to the power supply is solved much more simply than in the case of the known systems in which the electrical connectors must pass through the hermetically sealed enclosure containing the gas. Even further, the claimed features allow for the manufacturing cost of the lamp to be considerably lower. Please see the discussions on at least pages 3 and 4 of the present application.

Additionally, the applied art does not teach or suggest that the electrical insulation associated with the electrode is assembled with one or more other additional electrical insulations, as recited in Claim 29. Park merely discusses first and second electrodes 33, 33a buried in the substrates 31a, 31 and facing the internal discharge region. In accordance with the features of the claimed invention, joining one or more electrical insulations to the glass substrate(s) of the lamp makes it possible, apart from protecting the electrodes, to produce decorative or illuminating objects incorporating decorative plates that present flat decorations, for example photographs, screen printing, and enameled decorations.

Additionally, the applied art does not teach or suggest that a lateral surface of the spacers is coated with a phosphor material, as recited in Claim 42. In accordance with this feature, the loss of light by absorption in the material of the spacers is prevented. The applied art does not teach or suggest this feature.

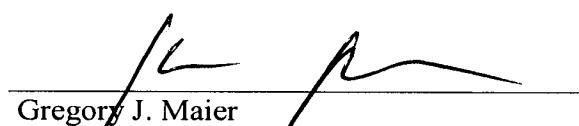
Accordingly, the features of the claimed invention are not taught or suggested by the applied art and therefore, the applied art cannot provide at least the advantages discussed above. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is respectfully requested.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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